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## The envelope, please

By John McKay

It's that time again. Balloons abound as another round of the Employee Recognition Program singles out DAS employees for a job well done.

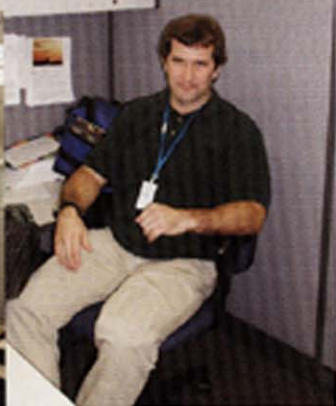
Most surprised by their win was the Internal Audit team of Bob Wallace, Sue DeMauro, and Eileen Morin who won the *Team Excellence Award*.

"Someone said something nice about Internal Audit?" joked Wallace. "Usually we don't get that kind of attention." The unit was cited for its work with the Business CONNECTIONS office in conducting on-site visits at certified small businesses throughout the state.

The nominators wrote, "The procedure for the on-site visits has been an evolving process. Bob, Eileen, and Susan have effectively taken this procedure and worked with the Business CONNECTIONS staff to develop a productive team. They directed their energies toward problem solving and task effectiveness to achieve the most accurate outcome."

The *Remarkable Innovation Award* went to MIS' team of Doug Belli, Sue Cieniewicz, Dan Duggan, Mark Grzymajlo, Richard Omohundro, Mohammed Sheik, Kim Shepard, and Lori Smith.

They "worked from scratch" to design, develop, and program a new Collections billing system called Diamond. The



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system now consolidates multiple databases into one location, with added features of online accounts and online payment processing.

The nominator said, "The FSC-MIS staff creation of the Diamond system has brought us into the 21<sup>st</sup> century, enabling us to be more efficient, and giving us the tools to do our jobs."

ERP's *Customer Service Award* went to Christopher Fons in FSC's Recovery Unit for his knowledge and professionalism. Wrote the nominator, "I am most impressed with his ability to deal with clients who are not always aware, nor wanting to know, of their liability to pay back money that has been given for their dependent's support. It is not an easy job; it requires knowledge of the Department of Social Services, CT Child Support System, Medicaid screens, as well as state statutes."

Chris Smith is this year's recipient of the *Going The Extra Mile Award*.

Smith is DAS' resident Lotus Notes answer man and has taken his duties one step further.

A new e-fax system has been added to Lotus Notes, enabling employees to fax directly from their computers - reducing paper and the time it takes to send one fax to multiple recipients. He's also been on point for automating other daily tasks. For example, he has put numerous forms online, automated



Here come the balloons as the ERP Committee members descend upon unsuspecting winners!

employee surveys, and is now working to automate time and attendance sheets on Lotus Notes.

All ERP winners will be honored at a luncheon on November 29.

## ERP survey is in and lookin' good

By Donna Micklus and Cheryl Sawina

**W**e must be doing something right.

The responses are in from the Employee Recognition Program questionnaire sent out to DAS employees earlier this fall. With about a 10 percent response rate, people provided keen insight into what the feeling was about the ERP program.

"For the most part, employees are very satisfied, with many thinking the committee should continue the same schedule and format. Everyone really likes the themes, kickoffs and ceremonies," said Cheryl Sawina who coordinates the program committee. "As expected, employees would also like to see more folks recognized," she added.

Sawina reported that the greatest concern seemed to be around the nomination and selection processes. She said that anyone unclear on the process itself should refer to the program bylaws on DAS Central under Reference/Procedure/Employee Recognition Award Program Bylaws.

"The bylaws detail the intent of

the program with examples of what employees are recognized for along with the award categories and criteria. The language can be very helpful when someone is writing a nomination," she explained.

The ERP Committee does the actual selection process. When the chairperson receives nominations, each is cleared of any identifying features. Deleted are business center names, the nominee's name, and any specific references that may "give away" the nominee. "That way," Sawina said, "the committee can really concentrate on the intent of the nomination and remain objective. If any committee member figures out who or what the nomination is, we ask that they refrain from rating."

The intent is to be as objective as possible. The committee uses a rating system from one to five and is looking for the "above and beyond" nomination. Once the nominations are rated, the chairperson adds the scores and takes the top from each category. These names are then checked through the personnel office and presented to the Commissioner.

"We really appreciate the time employees took to respond to the survey, and it's gratifying to know we seem to be on track with the program," Sawina said.

## **DAS Times**

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Contributions are welcome but may be edited for space and clarity.

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[www.das.state.ct.us](http://www.das.state.ct.us)



Victor Baran from the Amerada Hess Corporation complimented **DAS' website** stating, "the State of Connecticut has the best purchasing website that I have worked with among the states of NY, NJ, NC, and SC. Keep up the great work in Connecticut!"

Kudos to **Bernie Blumenthal** from Dan Donahue. "The Bristol Housing Authority had been paying an annual premium of \$98,918 for liability coverage for their federal units with a deductible of \$1,000, Bernie arranged for liability coverage with no deductible at an annual premium of \$76,700, savings of \$19,794 per year!"

Cornell University's Paul Rumely, who was the featured speaker at DAS' HR Strategic Planning Symposium, commended **Donna Micklus** and the **Communications Office** for the October issue of the DAS Times. "I truly enjoyed it; my congratulations to the editors!"

Susan Zampaglione from the Department of Environmental Protection praised **Sandra Sharr** and **John McKay** for the recent issue of *What's News*. "I thought the format and layout looked great."

Jim Passier praised **Carlos Velez** for his "fantastic job of testifying before the Minority Business Sub Committee. **Meg Yetishefsky** and **Janis Nome** also contributed, and I was proud to be part of the team."

Brenda Samuels Woods applauded **Jim McKenna** for his class on *Untangling the Budget Web*. "It was well-organized and

your sense of humor kept it interesting. I have worked here for almost 10 years and had no idea of the depth of your experience!"

David Busanet from the Department of Public Works commended **Paul Greco** for the "great meeting regarding property manager snow removal services. You revised the specifications we submitted to conform with DAS requirements and have been most cooperative and helpful."

Kudos to **Don Casella** from Cindy Milardo for sharing his skills in obtaining "extremely-helpful financial information for reviewing a contractor's proposal. This is information that we can get within a matter of minutes. This is a great thing!"

Ron Clymer from the Commission on Human Rights and Opportunities (CHRO) praised **Natalie Shipman** for the "exceptional job on the Police Office Standards and Training Council's Affirmative Action Plan" which was approved at CHRO's last meeting.

Peggy Ramos thanked **Janet DelGreco** for her "guidance through a new process of acquiring temporary office help on such short notice, and was extraordinarily efficient and helpful."

Patsy McLaughlin applauded **John McKay** for "all of his time, effort, and advertising support for the Nursing Career Fair, which helped make it such a big success."

Bob King from the Office of the State Comptroller complimented

**Marilyn LaFontaine** for organizing and adding addresses to their huge mailing list for training in PeopleSoft and said, "I am really impressed; you have given us a huge shot in the arm!"

Congratulations to the **Property Distribution Center** from Roy Dion on the excellent results of the customer satisfaction survey.

## Hats Off

By Cindy Rusczyk

"Customers are the best measure of how well we are doing and their assessment of the team says it all. Thanks for the commitment, dedication, and professionalism you bring to the job everyday."

Richard J. Kingston from the Connecticut State Library commended **Sandra Sharr** for *What's News*. "I found the articles well-written and full of interesting and important information for any state manager and supervisor..."

Commissioner T.R. Anson from the Department of Public Works praised the "tireless efforts of **Larry King**, **Vickye Ward**, and **Patty Gallucci** in getting out three very important, time-sensitive print jobs with extremely short notice. Their professionalism and efficiency deserves recognition."

Patti Kokonowski praised **Peter Varhol** for all of his fundraising efforts for the City of New York and said, "Thanks for taking the initiative to represent DAS in this time of grief and need. Way to go Pete!"



## Where customers meet "The Marketplace" online

**D**AS' Food Distribution Program (FDP) has gotten so busy that Director Doris Vieira equates her three latest projects to raising a family.

"It's like having babies around here," she joked. "Each project takes on a life and personality of its own."

Their first project focused on getting customers enrolled and comfortable with the new online ordering system.

The system allows customers to log into the FDP website "The Marketplace," place their orders, and send them in electronically.

"Customers are very impressed with the system," said Vieira.

## Victories

By John McKay

"We have about 65 customers enrolled and all 240 customers have to be online by July 1, 2002 – so we're making progress. Because customers are much happier, our phones are ringing a lot less, and most issues can be handled online."



**Let's make a deal!** Lowell Stange of the Plymouth public schools hands FDP's Doris Vieira and Olga Delarosa a \$50 check for a surplus computer. The computer will enable Plymouth public schools to use FDP's new online ordering system.

Vieira gave special acknowledgement to MIS' Mark Zager who has been diligently working on the online ordering system for FDP.

What if a school doesn't have a computer? Not a problem.

Through DAS' Surplus Property Distribution, FDP was able to arrange for Plymouth public schools to purchase a computer for \$50 so they could get online and begin ordering their supplies through

The Marketplace.

Another project called the non-billing initiative streamlines a billing process between Connecticut schools, the Department of Education (DOE) and FDP.

"In a nutshell it deducts our administrative and processing fees

from a reimbursement the schools get from DOE," said Vieira.

"It's a big timesaver for everyone involved, and one less thing our customers need to worry about."

Vieira also wanted to give kudos to MIS' Sue Miller and Angelika Scheffera for all their efforts.

Gearing up for 2002, FDP will be hosting its first Statewide Directors Meeting and Food Show early next year.

"We have all the directors in one place so we can give them a really comprehensive presentation on all the improvements we've made, introduce them to the FDP Marketplace, as well as discuss the ton of changes happening in the U.S. Department of Agriculture. Plus with all the food vendors there, we will really have a captive audience!" she added.



# Neither rain nor snow nor heat nor gloom...

**I**t's something most of us take for granted. Every morning we expect to get the mail – both out-of-office and interdepartmental mail.

Well, how about 36,000 pieces of mail a day!

That's how much mail the DAS mail team sorts for delivery to state buildings across Connecticut each day. Very impressive. And it seems that no matter how early employees arrive at their offices, the mail is already there waiting for them - DAS mail team employees start their busy days at 6:00 a.m., if not earlier.

Some of the more comical things they've seen in their daily routines are beepers being mailed through the system. "It's very weird to handle a piece of mail when it suddenly starts vibrating and beeping," said Eileen Griffin.

But what most frustrates the DAS mail team are incorrect addresses.

"We still get mail addressed to Governor Weicker and Governor Grasso," said Doreene Nadler.

"And we still get mail for the Department of Environmental Protection with a 165 Capitol Avenue address," she added. Nadler went on to say that the best thing people can do is request a courier booklet that has the most updated mailing addresses for state offices. *(To request one, please email her at [Doreene.Nadler@po.state.ct.us](mailto:Doreene.Nadler@po.state.ct.us).)*

So, what happens to those 36,000 pieces of mail sorted by the DAS mail team?

DAS' couriers have 11 delivery routes that cover Connecticut.

The U.S. Post Office's slogan, "Neither snow nor rain nor heat nor gloom of night stays these couriers

*from the swift completion of their appointed rounds*" seems to fit appropriately to these employees as well. When other state employees are sent home because of inclement weather, the mail and courier crew don't have that luxury. The couriers themselves need to be on the road bright and early to make their rounds, find parking, and delivery bays, and still make it back for another day of deliveries.

A recent improvement for the couriers has been the addition of cell phones for the drivers.

Previously, if the state had to close for weather conditions, delivery personnel didn't know about it until they found their next delivery office closed. Or if they

became stranded because of mechanical failure, they had to rely on the goodness of strangers to help them out of a jam.

So next time you open your mail, remember that there is a whole team of DAS employees behind each letter, personally making sure it gets delivered to you.

## Up Close

By John McKay

The DAS Central Mail team (left) consists of: Ryan Preble, Eileen Griffin, Doreene Nadler and Angela Fuggetta (not pictured: Rich Ballestrini, Phil McDermott and Janice Nichols).

Statewide Courier Service employees are: Andrew Seegobin, Samuel Thompson, Jr., Rich Gugliemino, Nereida Lopez, Robert Warren, Lee Cusano, Russell Harrison (not pictured: Aaron Barksdale, Willie Durant, Angel Garcia, Terry Mitchell, and Bill Rubeka).

We owe them all some well-deserved recognition and gratitude.





# Waters wraps up Fleet tour at Wethersfield Garage

By John McKay

It was the final pit-stop as Commissioner Barbara Waters finished up her annual tour of Fleet garages in late October at the Wethersfield garage.

The general discussion focused on ongoing needs such as equipment and additional training for employees.

"I am all for whatever you guys need and dedicated to seeing that you get the training and tools to do your jobs. Whatever that is, please let your supervisors know, and we'll try to get it to you as soon as possible," said Waters.

Waters also brought along MIS guru Linda Hubeny to answer any computer and technical questions, and to do a quick checkup on the garage's computers.

**"I am all for whatever you guys need and dedicated to seeing that you get the training and tools to do your jobs."**

*Commissioner Waters*

Hubeny explained the effects of the recent NIMDA virus that destroyed ShopKey (ShopKey has now been restored) and reminded employees of the dangers of computer viruses and downloading anything from the Internet.

She also reminded employees to be patient with their Internet access because the speed of their Internet connection is a bit slower.

Employees then asked a few general questions on a number of subjects ranging from the possibility of



Commissioner Barbara Waters and Business Enterprises Director Roy Dion listen to concerns of Fleet Operations employees at the Wethersfield Garage as they wind up their annual tour of all Fleet garages throughout the state.

early retirement offers (Waters said she was not aware of any), to online training and miscellaneous benefits questions.

"I think we've made a lot of progress with the Fleet garages," said Waters.

"A few years ago there were a lot of serious concerns that needed to be addressed immediately to help out the Fleet employees. Today, things seem to be very much under control and employees seem generally pleased with where Fleet is headed."

Following the informal question and answer discussion, one Fleet employee said, "Since Commissioner Waters has been doing these annual tours, Fleet has a lot fewer issues and really feels respected and recognized by DAS. Before this Commissioner, we got very little attention. Now we feel like we have a voice."





# It's the double nickel for the *Digest* as it turns 55!

By Donna Micklus

Whoever the guy was who said, "Age is a state of mind" had no clue what he was talking about (it had to be a guy because women know the ugly truth).

At 55, *The Digest* is just plain getting up there in years. Think about it. In a world where a significant part of the population can't remember life before Pokemon, *The Digest of Administrative Reports to the Governor* has been around since 1946 - that's before TV (no, not MTV...we're talking black and white), before Ike, hula hoops, and Elvis.

Fad after fad has come and gone, but *The Digest* just keeps on keepin' on.

Familiarly known as one of the most labor-intensive tasks of the DAS Communications Office, Cindy Rusczyk, John McKay, and Nina Ritson deserve some sort of special medal or at the very least spiritual dispensation for the patience needed to produce this annual tome. They can never have a restful summer, because each August 1 the reports from all state agencies start arriving and the fun begins.

While Deputy Commissioner Alan Mazzola rather enjoys comparing

*The Digest* to a single email from Dr. Martin Anderson, *The Digest* does have a lot of good resource data and can even boast its own set of loyal subscribers.

As time-consuming as the publication process is, nevertheless there is always a feeling of satisfaction and even pride when the finished product is delivered.

Each year the Communications Office also tries to develop a new and creative thematic for the *Digest*. This year, we chose to pictorially feature some famous native-born Nutmeggers.

C'mon, be honest - can you really name all ten?

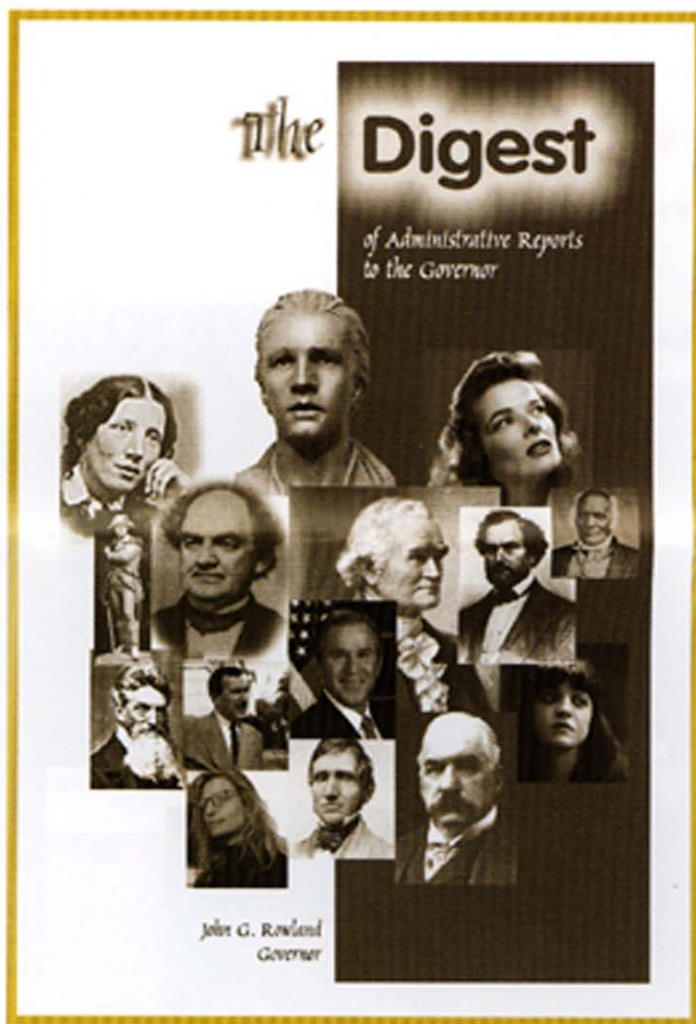
But for the fun of it, test your historical acumen anyway...and don't look at the answers until

you've at least tried.

Start at the top and go left to right in descending order.

Finally, in addition to perusing the many achievements of our colleagues in state government, please take some time to look at our own DAS section which so many of you helped to create. Guaranteed, you'll be proud to be a part of an agency whose strategic accomplishments and visionary thinking are so prominent.

1. Harriet Beecher Stowe 2. Nathan Hale 3. Katherine Hepburn 4. Ethan Allen 5. P.T. Barnum 6. Noah Webster 7. Samuel Colt 8. James Mars 9. John Brown 10. Adam Clayton Powell 11. George W. Bush 12. Annie Lebovitz 13. Charles Goodyear 14. J.P. Morgan 15. Rosa Ponselle





DAS was out in force for the Halloween Tea Cup Auction to benefit the State Employee Campaign for Charitable Giving. Commissioner Waters made a bewitching appearance at the event which raised \$1,225.



Please give generously.



UConn Husky hoopsters (top, l. to r.) Megan Pattyson, John Gwynn and Oliver Macklin pose with DAS' (l. to r.) Mayme Casady, Michelle Olesen, Lorna Barclay and Sue Turko at the October "Dunk the Commish" rally to raise money for the Campaign for Charitable Giving. The volunteer "Commish" was Commissioner Gene Gavin of Revenue Services.

#### And from the FDNY to DAS...



**FIRE DEPARTMENT**  
15 CANAL ST., NEW YORK, N.Y. 10002  
TEL. 212-674-4219 FAX 212-674-4219  
**ENGINE COMPANY 9**

TO: Commissioner Barbara Waters Dept. Of Administrative Services  
FROM: Lt. Joseph Chan Lieutenant  
DATE: September 21, 2001  
SUBJECT: Box 8887, World Trade Center

To: Commissioner Barbara Waters and Fellow Connecticut State Workers,

We the members of Engine Company 9 and Ladder Company 6 would like to articulate to you our deep appreciation for your generous donation. We are all profoundly touched that fellow Americans from the State of Connecticut can connect with a small unpretentious firehouse in lower Manhattan and lend its service.

It is our job to extinguish fire and rescue people and everything we go to work, that is our mission. We are people who instantly enjoy giving to and helping others. We are far from being material and value the simple things in life. A fireman was the kid who shared his candy bar before he took his own bite. He was the kid who stood up and protected the other kids from being bullied. Yes, we are unassuming everyday heroes. Because of your concern for others in these time of loss and taking an initiative by giving this gift to us, you are our heroes as I so define.

Your support in our time of loss makes us all proud to be firefighters and proud to be an American. Again, we thank you and "God Bless America".

Respectfully Submitted,

Lt. Eng. 9 Gp. 24